

*Space Station and Super Collider*

*Mr. Adler.* Mr. President, how long can you guarantee that support for the super collider and the space station? Will they fall if that's the only way to meet your overall deficit reduction goal?

*The President.* Well, my overall deficit reduction goals can be met in my plan with the space station and the super collider. I do want to emphasize that we've already shaved \$4 billion off the 5-year budget for the space station and some money off the 5-year budget for the super collider by redesigning the space station, based on a team of exceptional national experts who analyzed the project and recommended that it be redesigned and also that NASA's management be changed rather dramatically. And we just delayed the implementation schedule on the super collider some, so that none of the opponents of the space station and the super collider could claim that there had been no spending cut there.

So we have done that. But I strongly feel it would be a mistake to abandon those. Now, I would be less than candid if I didn't tell you that there are a lot of people in other parts

of the country who want to cut those projects. There was always a lot of opposition to them, and because of the last election and all of the rhetoric and all the claims in Texas that there were no spending cuts in this budget, that has given real energy to the opponents of the space station and the super collider. It wasn't true that there were no spending cuts, but there are a lot of people up there who have been wanting to kill these projects for years who are just gleeful at the way the rhetoric in the last election played out in Texas. They think that they have been given a license by the people of Texas to kill the space station and the super collider. And it's going to be very much harder for me to keep them alive. But I'm doing the best I can.

*Mr. Adler.* Mr. President, I'm informed that our time has run out, by one of your aides, I believe. Good to talk with you this morning.

*The President.* Thank you. I enjoyed it.

NOTE: The interview began at 12:42 p.m. The President spoke from the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

## Interview With Tim Scheld of WCBS Radio, New York City

June 21, 1993

*Mr. Scheld.* Good afternoon. President Bill Clinton, joining us from the Roosevelt Room of the White House this afternoon. A good decision, Mr. President, since it is as hot and muggy as you're going to get in New York City today. Be happy you're inside and in Washington, DC.

*The President.* It's pretty hot and muggy here, too, Tim.

*Mr. Scheld.* I heard you were jogging this morning in a lot of fog. No fog anywhere in New York City. We're looking for some, so bring some up here, please, next time you come.

*The President.* I had a great time today, for all the joggers listening to you. I got to run with John Fixx, who is the son of the famous runner Jim Fixx, who died about 9 years ago but made a real contribution to what all of us who love jogging know as the sport.

*Mr. Scheld.* Yes, but the question now is do you run with Michael Jordan tomorrow?

*The President.* I'd love to do it if he were willing.

### *Economic Program*

*Mr. Scheld.* I appreciate you taking the time with us here on WCBS this afternoon. The Senate begins debate on the all-important economic package, but its ultimate shape, as you know, will be determined by the Joint House-Senate Committee probably beginning the 1st of July. Will we see the Btu energy tax proposal be reborn out of that committee, Mr. President? What kind of specific new energy taxes should the American people expect?

*The President.* Well, first let me say that before we can start that conference, Senator Moynihan has got to shepherd this bill through the Senate, and that's not going to be all that easy. I think we can do it. But there's been so much rhetoric around this economic program and so

much inaccurate information put out there that it's not going to be easy to get the Senators to make the tough choices to pass the bill. I think they will do that, and I think in no small measure they will do it because of the leadership of your Senator in leading the Senate Finance Committee.

But after that, the House and the Senate will get together. And I think they'll try to agree on a provision with regard to energy which will do what all of us agreed to do, which is to reduce the energy tax somewhat below where it was in the House version, have some more spending cuts, make it clear to the American people there are more spending cuts than tax increases in this program and that they are fair and balanced.

The Secretary of the Treasury, Lloyd Bentsen, had a good suggestion, I thought, for reducing the Btu tax, reducing its impact on jobs through lowering the industry and agricultural provisions and cutting the rates across the board on middle class Americans but still leaving it in there so there would always be an incentive for energy conservation, environmental cleanup, and switching to American natural gas.

But one of the Senators on the Senate Finance Committee had said he would never vote for a bill based on the heat content of energy, which meant that they had to change the form of the energy levy. And we'll just have to see what comes out of the conference. I don't know what will happen.

*Mr. Scheld.* This is pretty complicated, but the American people were so well-informed a couple of months ago exactly how much it was going to cost. I think people were—at least in this area, I think we got the impression that people were willing to bite their bottom lip and to pay for deficit reduction. Are you taking that attitude back to the Senate and saying, listen to the American people?

*The President.* I'm really trying to. And I think what happened was that from the time I gave my speech outlining the plan in February to the American people directly, including telling everybody exactly what we were going to cut and exactly what it would cost, after that the details got lost in all the word games going back and forth and the shouting. And what I tried to do last week by giving a prime-time news conference and doing a number of other things was to let the American people know exactly what was in this bill. Maybe it's worth restating.

There are \$250 billion of spending cuts and \$250 billion of revenue increases and \$500 billion of deficit reduction in this package. Of every \$10 in cutting the debt, \$5 comes in spending cuts; \$3.75 comes from people with incomes above \$100,000; \$1.25 comes from people with incomes below \$100,000 but above \$30,000. People below that are held harmless. That's about how it works.

*Mr. Scheld.* One Member of Congress over the weekend, I think, was quoted as saying that's engaging in politics of envy, pitting the higher income brackets against those that can't afford it.

*The President.* No.

*Mr. Scheld.* Well, what do you say to that?

*The President.* I have a clear answer to that. I don't seek to punish anybody for their success. But if you look at what happened in the 1980's, we had the reverse of the politics of envy. In the 1980's taxes went up on the middle class while their incomes went down. Taxes went down on upper income people while their incomes went up. This has nothing to do with the politics of envy.

I want it to be possible for people to have more successes. If you look at this bill that is moving its way through Congress, there are big incentives for people to start new businesses, for small businesses to hire extra people, for bigger industries to invest in new plant and equipment, for all private sector people to actually make money by reinvesting in our inner cities and our rural areas again. This is not about the politics of envy. This is about who can afford to pay the freight.

In the last 12 years, we had tax decreases on upper income people and tax increases on the middle class, even though their income trends were just the reverse. So this is nothing but fairness. This is not about class war. This is about fairness.

#### *Health Care Reform*

*Mr. Scheld.* Mr. President, on health care reform, our own Senator Moynihan, you brought up his name, expressed some doubt over the weekend that health care reform would make it to Congress this year. Any update on that?

*The President.* I still think we can do it this year if we pass the budget in an expeditious way and if the health care reform proposal is perceived as fair by the vast majority of the

American people and if it deals with the problems of the country. That is, can we bring the cost of health care in line with inflation? That's good for business. Can we remove the insecurity that millions of Americans have that they're going to lose their health insurance because of the cost or because somebody in their family's been sick or because they're going to change jobs? Can we provide a way to bring coverage to people who don't have it? Seventy percent of them work for a living. Can we do it in ways that are affordable and balanced, and can we do it in ways that don't in any way affect the right of Americans to choose their doctors or to keep very high quality health care?

If we can do that, then I think you will see a willingness on the part of Congress to take this up, knowing that the whole job can't be done overnight. That is, we could adopt an omnibus bill and still have to phase in the actual practical implementation of it so that if there are problems along the way, they can be corrected.

Senator Moynihan has a lot of experience about how slowly Congress acts, but I think the American people are so hungry and so hurting for something to be done on health care that they'd like to see it dealt with this year, and they'd like to see us at least make a good beginning. I believe with a little luck we can get it done this year.

*Henry Leon Ritzenthaler*

*Mr. Scheld.* Mr. President, reading the Washington Post this morning, seeing quotes from a colleague or a friend of yours and someone who I know, Betsy Wright, I'm wondering whether this claim from the Paradise, California, man merits any reaction from you.

*The President.* I'll be glad to give you a reaction, but let me say I have tried to call him today and have not talked to him yet. And I think I ought to talk to him before I make any public statement. But I'll put out a statement about it later on today.

*Former President George Bush*

*Mr. Scheld.* Fair enough, Mr. President. Have you heard from the FBI, by the way, on the inquiry into the alleged plot against former President Bush in Kuwait a couple of months ago?

*The President.* I have not received a final report from the FBI, and I don't think I should

say anything about what I will or won't do until I do get that report.

*Mr. Scheld.* So it's either all the wrong questions or all the right questions I get to ask you. *[Laughter]*

*The President.* No, they're both good questions, and I'm sorry, but it's not in the national interest for me to discuss that until I actually know what I can say about it when I get the report.

#### *President's Visits to New York*

*Mr. Scheld.* Absolutely. One other final question for you here. It concerns when you come to New York, and I'm sure you will be in this area for Governor Florio and for Mayor Dinkins, campaigning; that's my guess, at least. What do you tell the people who are sitting in traffic sometimes because of a Presidential visit? It's a loaded question, sir.

*The President.* It really bothers me when I come there. I told Mayor Dinkins the last time I was there, I was so concerned that it required so many police officers and firemen. And it seems that the President interrupts the flow of events more coming to New York than any other place because of the density of the population and the traffic. It really concerns me.

One of the things that I can do and one of the things I did do the last time I came was to land at the airport and then take a helicopter in as close as I can to where I'm driving so that really minimizes the disruption to the other people and traffic. You know, I love to come to New York, and I think it's a good thing for the President to be in New York and to be on the streets and to be with the people, and it's such an important part of our national life. There are so many people there I need to talk to and see and listen to. But it bothers me when I inconvenience a lot of people.

*Mr. Scheld.* Well, we leave you the invitation to always come back here and talk to people, but this is a way to get through to them without causing some traffic problems. But come here anyway. We'd love to see you.

*The President.* I'd love to do it. Maybe we can do it. Maybe radio can be the best alternative.

*Mr. Scheld.* Absolutely, sir. Thank you for taking the time this afternoon.

*The President.* Thanks.

NOTE: The interview began at 12:49 p.m. The President spoke from the Roosevelt Room at the White House. A question referred to newspaper

reports that Henry Leon Ritzenthaler might be the President's half-brother.

## Interview With Larry King June 21, 1993

*Mr. King.* Welcome back to another hour of "The Larry King Show." Great pleasure to have with us—the last time we had him on a radio show he was in a car in Detroit during the campaign, getting to the airport. In fact, he gave us a visual description of the highway. Do you remember that?

*The President.* I do remember it.

### *Economic Program*

*Mr. King.* President Clinton, a couple of things. First, Senator Phil Gramm last week on my television show said—the Republican from Texas—anytime, anywhere, anyplace he'll come to the White House, he'll meet with you, he'll sit down to work out a deal on the economy from the Republican Party standpoint. He said, you invite him, he's there. What about it?

*The President.* I'm always happy to talk to Senator Gramm, but the issue is, what are they for? I mean, there at least was a Republican budget offered in the House of Representatives, and more Republicans voted against it than Democrats voted against my budget. There was a bipartisan budget offered in the Senate Finance Committee which by common consent probably couldn't get 20 votes on the floor of the Senate. So what I want to know is, what are they for? I have met with the Republican Senators completely. I meet with the leadership of the Republicans along with the Democrats all the time. I am always anxious to discuss this. But we need to know what the specifics are. I mean, I put out a plan that has \$250 billion in tax cuts in it that affects agriculture, veterans, defense, foreign aid, the Federal employee pay, Federal employee retirement, cuts huge amounts out of all these things. They've been trying to convince the American people that there are no spending cuts. Senator Gramm tried to do it in his own State of Texas in the recent election season.

So, if we're going to have anything to talk about, we've all got to at least say what the

facts are. All I'm saying is I'd be happy to have any suggestions he has, but we've got to know where we're going on this.

*Mr. King.* You're saying it would be pointless to sit down unless they come in with a preagenda?

*The President.* The Senate Finance Committee met last week on the economic plan and dealt with a lot of Republican amendments after they went all over the country saying the issue was spending. The Republicans tried to lower taxes in a lot of different ways, mostly on upper income folks. And everything they offered would have increased the deficit because they did not introduce one single spending cut amendment, because those are the tough and controversial things, because they know how much we've already cut spending in this budget.

So, all I'm saying is, you know, I'll talk to Phil Gramm; I'll talk to anybody. He may want to talk to me this week because I'm trying to save the space station and the super collider in his State, two things I believe in. After having shaved down the space station by \$4 billion and shaved the cost of the super collider some, I believe they're important for America as investments in science and technology. But there are a lot of people who are against these projects who are going to try to take his rhetoric and the rhetoric of the recent Texas election and use it against him because of the things they said. So, Senator Gramm may need me this week because I agree with him on this issue, and I hope we can save them for America's sake. But the political rhetoric of some of the Republicans in pretending that there are no spending cuts has made it tougher.

*Mr. King.* So in other words, what everybody wants is, they don't want to pay new taxes; they don't want to cut any services. We just want a free ride.

*The President.* Yes, and we want to do it in a way that looks politically palatable. So they